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ance, and to reduce rates to a mathematical basis wholly inconsistent with the rational development of commerce. The direct tendency of their efforts has been to obstruct the general dissemination of industrial or commercial activity in any line of business, but, on the contrary, to centralize the same in that place which would, according to the Commission's mathematical views, be given a preferential rate.

It is not so clear that as between conferring upon the Interstate Commerce Commission the wholly unnecessary power to fix rates, on the one hand, and the Government's assuming the ownership of railways on the other, that railway men should be frightened into accepting the former alternative. If rates on over 180,000 miles of railroad are to be fixed by a commission of five men, who cannot possibly master the details which would be involved, with almost unlimited power to impede or obliterate innumerable channels of commerce, it might be decidedly better for the railroad interests if the Government should acquire the railroads and should itself suffer the disastrous results of such rate-making experiments. If the Government acquire the railroads, the owners of the railroads will certainly be compensated for them. In this instance, at least, the railroads will have something tangible on which to rely, but if a commission be authorized to make rates for all the railroads in this country, the damage such commission will do in interfering with the channels of commerce and in depriving many railways of species of traffic now enjoyed with profit to themselves and to the benefit of the public, will be incapable of computation and irremediable.

The fact is, however, that no such alternative is presented. The public is not suffering from extortionate rates, and is not demanding that the radical and unlimited powers sought by the Interstate Commerce Commission should be conferred upon that body. The only serious evil of the rate situation—that of secret rate-cutting and the consequent unjust discriminations—cannot possibly be reached by the amendments proposed by the Commission. All other evils of the rate situation are susceptible of complete remedy under the law as it stands.

The demands of the Commission have no connection with the subject of pooling, and should be considered purely as an independent proposition. Considered as an independent proposition, there is no necessity or excuse for granting them. The persistence of the Commission and its friends in constantly coupling these demands for general and extensive powers with the entirely distinct subject of railway pooling is of itself strong evidence that those demands are groundless and cannot stand by themselves.

MILTON H. SMITH.

WOMEN IN NEW ZEALAND.

MOMENTOUS changes were expected to follow the granting of the franchise to the women of New Zealand. Society was to be turned topsy-turvy; women were to become men and men women, or, at any rate, the sexes were to exchange places in the every-day work and political government of the world. But these extravagant prophecies have not yet come to pass in the land of the Maori. Men there are still men, and women are still their mothers, sisters, sweethearts and wives, and, socially and industrially, each sex pursues the work to which it is adapted by natural fitness or to which it is drawn by circumstance.

It is true that the enfranchisement of women has led to some note-

worthy changes. There has been an increase in the number of women's societies devoted to political organization and social reform. These, through their delegates, are co-ordinated into a National Council of the women of New Zealand. This council was founded in April, 1896, just two years and a half after women obtained the political franchise. It meets once a year; its session lasts about ten days and its members read papers and discuss resolutions which they believe to have a practical bearing upon the well-being of society. As the council represents thousands of persons who possess votes, its deliberations are watched by public men, and in many instances its recommendations are given effect to by the government, in either administrative or legislative reform.

At first the National Council of women had to put up with jibes and jeers, especially from the newspapers; but it has survived that ordeal and is now seriously accepted as a public institution. True, there are people who misjudge and misrepresent it. Not long since, one newspaper devoted to religion wrote disparagingly of the members as being imbued with "a dislike of motherhood, a love of money, a desire for power and a love of publicity," and charged them with clamoring for "a lax marriage and an easy divorce law." This, however, is in no just sense a true bill; in fact it is true only as a typical expression of the prevailing human characteristic described by the poet who says:

"Yes, and the creed of man's whole crew
Is, 'Do forever as we do,
Else be then damned; and leave us still
To go whatever way we will,
Or we shall damn thee.'"

As a matter of fact, neither the Wild Woman nor the New Woman of the comic papers has yet come to the front in New Zealand, and it is doubtful if either species exists in the colony. Of course, if the term New Woman is fairly applicable to women of character and culture, merely because they desire to effect reform called for on the broad principle of social justice, then it may be applied to a good many women in New Zealand. Judged by their representatives in the National Council, the women of New Zealand stand by the principle that, morally, constitutionally and economically, they are as much citizens as men. They, therefore, wish to share, equally with men, all the rights of citizenship, and to see the moral code which is applied to them as individuals and citizens applied with equal emphasis to men. Whether this creed is capable of being carried out in practice, whether men are or ever will be willing and able to adjust themselves to it, is a thing apart; but the object of its upholders is, beyond doubt, the betterment of society. They do not wish to kick the beam, but to establish a just balance as between the members of the state.

Amongst New Zealand women, this principle of common citizenship is the principle whence they start and to which they return in all their efforts as reformers. For instance, in advocating the economic independence of women, they do not seek to separate or discriminate between the interests of man and wife, but to get the law to recognize their equality as economic factors in the household and the state. This is already done by men with a logical and civilized sense of justice; and the advanced women wish, by means of the law and public opinion, to bring social usage generally into line with the principle. Then amendment is proposed in the law of divorce, not to facilitate divorce *per se*, or to undermine the institution of marriage,

but to adjust the moral obligations of the sexes, by placing man and wife on an equal footing under the law. Equal pay for equal work, in callings open to both men and women, is asked for on similar grounds; firstly, as a matter of economic justice, and, secondly, in order that the woman, as a citizen, may have the same opportunities and the same advantages as the man, and be under no temptation to accept, for economic reasons, the first offer of marriage that is made to her.

So with other reforms. Women in New Zealand, like women elsewhere, are, of course, influenced by their feelings; but, in advocating matters of public policy, they are seldom at a loss for sound constitutional or economic reasons. For instance, in asking for special legislative and administrative machinery to deal educationally with the waifs and strays of society, they plead humanity, it is true, but they take their stand chiefly on the ground that society suffers, not only morally but economically, by having citizens who have not enjoyed human sympathy and educational care in their youth.

Notwithstanding the good sense exhibited by women in connection with these and other matters, there are, in New Zealand as elsewhere, grave and reverend persons who regard the whole woman movement as reactionary, and even look upon it as a menace to the very foundations of society. But, surely, they may possess their souls in patience. Man need have no fear, at least, that women will unfeminize themselves. They will still be mothers, sisters, sweethearts and wives, and it will be only in exceptional cases that they will compete directly with men in governing the world, or in doing its more strenuous work. There are vocations of paramount importance to which women are never likely to turn their serious attention; for example, those of the navigator, the explorer, the soldier, the pioneer, the bushfeller, teamster, roadman, engineer, builder and bridgemaker. But, as a citizen, woman's human and economic value is equal to that of man, and, therefore, in citizenship, she claims to be in every respect the man's equal. On this plane there must be no economic or other distinctions. This is all that is meant by the woman movement—at least in New Zealand.

JOHN CHRISTIE.

WHEAT PRODUCTION FROM A FARMER'S STANDPOINT.

WITHOUT presuming to attack any position taken by Mr. Hyde in the February REVIEW, can it not be shown that the danger of a wheat famine in 1931 is, perhaps, purely imaginary? Mr. Hyde overlooks the possibilities of greater production upon the present area of improved land, except as it may be aided by science. It is to this feature that, omitting what may be expected from methods not already in use, the discussion will be confined.

For several years prices have, quite generally, been unremunerative and production consequently limited. Farmers have refrained from hiring help and have contented themselves with what could be produced by the family. I know of no farm that is yielding to its fullest capacity; yet some are producing more than twice as much per acre as adjoining farms equally good.

To illustrate: A farm of 200 acres, 160 of which are improved, receiving careful treatment and above the average condition of farms in the vicinity, has a cash income of from \$600 to \$700 yearly as the result of the work of two men. An adjoining farm of 40 acres, with the same labor, averages about \$500. A "river" farm of 40 acres, with a little more work, gives about \$1,000.